

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 13, 14, 15 and 16 as follows:

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1. (Amended) A print system comprising:

Q1 a terminal that generates image data;

at least one printer that performs print operations for forming an image on a recording medium using an ink based on print data; and

a printer controller that is connected between the terminal and the printer and converts the image data into the print data;

wherein the printer controller comprises:

predicting means for predicting a required ink amount indicating an amount of ink required for the printer to perform the print operations based on the print data;

a memory that stores required ink amount data indicating the required ink amount;

and

transmitting means for transmitting a request signal to the printer, the request signal requesting the printer to transmit remaining ink amount data indicating a remaining ink amount which indicates an amount of ink remaining in the printer;

the printer comprises:

managing means for managing the remaining ink amount data; and

transmitting means for transmitting the ink amount data in response to the request signal; and

at least one of the terminal and the printer controller comprises:

receiving means for receiving the remaining ink amount data from the transmitting means of the printer;

retrieving means for retrieving the required ink amount data stored in the memory;

determination means for determining based on the remaining ink amount data and the required ink amount data, whether or not the remaining ink amount is sufficient to complete the print operations, based on the print data, before the print operations are started; and

notifying means for notifying a user of a determination result determined by the determination means, the notifying means notifying the user before the print operations are started.

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13. (Amended) A printer controller connected between a terminal and a printer, the terminal generating image data, the printer performing print operations for forming an image on a recording medium based on print data, the printer transmitting remaining ink amount data indicating an amount of ink remaining in the printer in response to a request signal from external devices, the printer controller comprising:

converting means for converting the image data into the print data;

predicting means for predicting, based on the image data, a required ink amount indicating an ink amount required by the printer for performing the print operations based on the print data;

transmitting means for transmitting the request signal to the printer;

receiving means for receiving the remaining ink amount data from the printer;

determination means for determining, before the print operations start, whether the remaining ink amount is sufficient for the printer to complete the print operations, based on the print data; and

notifying means for notifying a user of determination results determined by the determination means before a printing operation based on the print data is started at the printer.

14. (Amended) A printer controller connected between a terminal and a printer, the terminal generating image data, the printer performing print operations for forming an image on a recording medium based on print data, the printer transmitting remaining ink amount data indicating an amount of ink remaining in the printer in response to a request signal from external devices, the printer controller comprising:

converting means for converting the image data into the print data;

predicting means for predicting, based on the image data, a required ink amount indicating an ink amount required by the printer for performing the print operations based on the print data;

first transmitting means for transmitting the request signal to the printer;

receiving means for receiving the remaining ink amount data from the printer;

OR determination means for determining, before the print operations start, whether the remaining ink amount is sufficient for the printer to complete the print operations based on the print data; and

second transmitting means for transmitting required ink amount data indicating the required ink amount and the remaining ink amount data to the terminal.

15. (Amended) A predicting method for predicting a required ink amount required by a printer for performing print operations, the predicting method comprising the steps of:

generating preview data based on image data, by reducing the size of the image data;

determining an average tone of pixels of a preview image, the preview image being formed based on the preview data;

based on the average tone, calculating an average density of a print image to be printed;

and

detecting an ink amount required for printing an entire print region with the average density at an actual size.

16. (Amended) A notifying method of notifying a user of an ink amount, the notifying method comprising the steps of:

- (a) converting image data into print data;
- (b) predicting a required ink amount indicating an ink amount required by a printer for performing print operations, the print operations being performed for forming a print image on recording medium based on the print data;
- (c) detecting a remaining ink amount indicating an ink amount remaining in the printer;
- (d) comparing the required ink amount with the remaining ink amount;
- (e) determining whether or not the remaining ink amount is sufficient for the printer to complete the print operations based on the print data; and
- (f) notifying a user of a determining result of the step (e), before the printer starts performing the print operations based on the print data.